

# Norvis

## Land Data

**Area:** Approx. 30 million sq.mi. (1958 mi. East/West, 15452mi. North/South)

**Population:** Estimated 19 million, colonized humanoid races.

**Highest Point:** Thunder Peak, 32562 ft. above sea level

**Lowest Point:** Painpit Chasm, 345 ft. below sea level

## History

Norvis is home to the Dwarven Empire in the south, and the Giant Lands in the north. For a time, the dwarves were the only great kingdom that was known on the continent. While there were small outposts of other races, few could survive the terrain due to the elevation of the land and unforgiving weather. As time rolled on, the dwarves grew in number and they expanded out from beneath the great peaks of the Thunder Mountains, exploring and spreading across the surface. They found little that they enjoyed in the south, though as they journeyed north the mountains peaks became hills some thousand feet below where they had begun. These flatlands and rolling hills spanned the middle of the continent all the way to the foot of the Moreaxe Mountains. In modern times most of this land is gone, its place taken by the Painpit Chasm that now divides Norvis from coast to coast. Along their journeys they encountered small villages of humans and smatterings of other races, though this thinned greatly as they ventured north of the Chasm. Upon reaching the hills of the Moreaxe Mountains they would quickly learn why: the lands in the north were the Giant Lands. Clans of hill giants occupied the lowest portion of the ranges, as well as further north and high up the mountains. Fiercely territorial, the hill giants resented such intrusions, but the masters of the hammer felt they had a right to claim the great mountains for themselves, and in time a war would break out.

### **The Giant Slaughter**

This wasn't really a war, but more a fight for survival on the part of the dwarves. Only a month after they had began to settle in known giant territory, they were discovered. The town was destroyed, most of the residents slaughtered or eaten. It was never said what happened to the people who were unfortunate enough to live, however it was speculated that they were used as slave labor to work the giants' lands to the point where they dropped dead from malnutrition. It was not long after this raid that these attacks would spread like wildfire, for the giants had no intentions to share their lands. When the Emperor received word of these raids, he realized he had to act quickly, because it was clear that there was no reasoning with the giants; any and all attempts at diplomacy ended in either the messengers never returning, or finding only their torn limbs. The conflict dragged on for many of years with the dwarfs pushing the giants back, however at such high casualty rates that it was as if the dwarfs themselves were killing each other. There was a time when the empire was on its last leg, so the emperor did what he had said that he would only do in dire circumstances: he taught many of his people how to harness the power of the skies. The issue with this prospect, though, was that the emperor had trained

much of his life to control this power, so training people in this art as fast as he did came with the potential for ruin. Almost all of the those he trained had become insane. The amount of knowledge that they had acquired and the speed at which they learned drew them closer and closer to the edge. On the other hand, these successful at controlling this ability became known as Whips, and had the power to destroy giants even when the odds were stacked against them. These Whips were one of the turning points that led the dwarves to finally be able to push the giants back to their northern mountain homelands. While this quelled the conflict for a time, the centuries to follow were marred by other small wars between the dwarves and the giants.

While war would become a constant part of survival for the dwarves, others that inhabited the mainland simply lived along the coast and in the hills to the far south; where while there were always the wilds to deal with, there were definitely no giants. More than a dozen villages of small size would spring up and die out in what would seem like mere years, and for a long time it was believed that the land was just brutal, but in fact it would later become known that it was due to a creature rare to Norvis. A hunter that came from the north; while the dwarven outpost were well guarded, the small non-military villages fell prey to these hunters. This issue continued until the Sundering of the continent where north was cut off from the south, but by that time almost all non-dwarven villages had been destroyed.

### **The Sundering**

History has long since lost any true account of the events that brought the breaking of the land of Norvis. Near the end of the 3rd age, individuals greedy with power on the past ages sought out the oldest of powers. It is said that men found the prison of the resting dragons, and in their greed made mistakes, unleashing the wrath of the brood onto the world of man. Within a few years, the skies over Norvis became thick with the brood. At first they seemed happy to simply pick off random livestock and steal riches, but at some point things changed and they began to war among themselves. The land and its inhabitants became trapped in the middle of a bloody war that would leave the lands destroyed. As the 3rd age came closer to its end, events would happen that would change the face of Norvis for all time. It is said that a Green and a Bronze brood fought for control of the lush lands of at the heart of Norvis, their battle lasting for weeks, rampaging from coast to coast and ripping the land asunder with each pass. The final straw was the two beasts battling in the air, then crashing into the earth with a sound that was heard and felt across Norvis, the earth giving way and collapsing to the bottom of the now chasm floor. As a result, several massive chunks of the cliff face broke and fell into the ocean forming the island to the east of the mainland.

## **Indigenous Races**

While scattered, there are handfuls of cities with some of every race within them; however the lands of Norvis are also home to a few large populations.

### **Deep Elves**

The race of Deep Elves call home the northern regions of Norvis, and the vast majority of all Deep Elves come from here. While a large amount of their empire remains underground, there

is also a very large portion that exists on the surface, north of the Giant city of Cunech.

### **Giants**

There are a number of clans and breeds of these near-human creatures. While they are big and dangerous, it appears that they are for the most part not very smart. While it is rumored that the Deep Elves have convinced the giants that they are dangerous spirits to stave off their aggression, none actually know.

### **Dwarves**

It should go without saying but Norvis is the homeland for the Dwarven clans. Their cities are scattered all across the southern region. While the majority of them are hidden below the surface they often have a small topside town that is used to trade with surface dwellers.

## **Terrain**

Norvis: a land known primarily by its harsh, mountainous landscape; as well as its very beautiful wildlife, almost as a counterpoint to the rugged terrain. There are two mountain ranges that root through the entire continent, their influence on the land is seen even from the sea. The majority of Norvis is around four thousand feet above the sea level, with the mountain ranges reaching even higher, their peaks up in the clouds; this makes the image of the land breathtaking when first approached by sea. While there is some amount of coastline, it is abutted by towering cliff faces that reach into the sky; likely why of all the continents, it is one that is not often explored, and outsiders do not seek it out as a land of new opportunities.

### **The Moreaxe Mountains**

This large range covers the majority of the northern half of the continent, consisting of two major peaks, which are eleven thousand and nine thousand feet above sea level respectively, and countless smaller peaks and foothills. While there is record of cities in the north, little is known of them since the Sundering, and what is known is that the northlands are ruled by giant clans.

### **The Thunder Mountains**

This range is located in the southern half of the continent and is home to the Dwarven Empire, in which resides its largest city and capitol, The Iron Jewel. The range acquired its name from a unique phenomenon that lies deep within the mountain, which causes a thunder like sound to emanate from the mountains from time to time. While these mountains are massive, it is due more to their reach than height; the peaks of the Moreaxe Mountains reach higher, but the Thunder Mountain range covers more land area.

### **The Painpit Chasm**

This chasm runs east to west, splitting the continent in half, and also houses the largest river in the world; for reasons unknown, the river flows from the center out to the oceans, moving in two separate directions. The river is wide and takes up a majority of the chasm floor, with a few notable recesses. The chasm is almost three miles across and is almost impassable without descending to the base and then climbing back up the other side. There are a few sky bridges

that have been built by the dwarves as a means of crossing, but are only usable when the winds are not too bad.

### **Akales Reef & The East Islands**

The islands were formed from fragments of the mainland breaking off during the Sundering, and since then have provided an ideal location for the Akales Reef to grow, which now houses some of the most rare sea life in the world.

## **Towns**

### **Lanminstry**

This is the main city for the dwarves, built inside of the Thunder Mountains. Lanminstry is a beacon of light and hope to all dwarves, its glory greater than any other dwarven city. The halls of this great city see thousands of dwarves and other visitors on a daily basis. There are two main trading areas: the first is outside of the great city, an outpost located on the surface where people from all over come to trade their goods with the dwarves. The outpost is also used as a forward defense for the city, allowing the city time to pull into the mountain and seal the tunnels while any attackers are busy trying to breach the walls. The second trade district is located inside the city proper, where citizens of the city and those outsiders which have been granted specific trading passes by the officials come to trade. The family houses of Lanminstry each have their own building in the city, and it is each house's responsibility to protect their own house as well as to serve the city. The castle, the center jewel of the Lanminstry, is able to be seen from anywhere in the city. It was built this way so that everyone could look upon it and know that if they put their trust in the ruler, then their might will become unbreakable.

### **Rendsnake**

At a time during the Giant Wars, Rendsnake was used as a forward command outpost for both training and tactical deployment, though since the days of the Sundering the city has become less military and more agricultural. Up until the dwarves explored out from the mountains, their access to certain foodstuffs was limited, however after the Sundering, the lush land along the southern ridge became perfect for farming. While the dwarves were new to this concept under the open sky, they were able to quickly make contact with a few small villages to the east, which shared with them the ways of farming in exchange for soldiers to help protect their villages from the wilds. This quickly began another growth period of the dwarves of Norvis. While the city is no longer a military post, being at the highest point near the chasm along the southern ridge gives Rendsnake a great vantage point of the lands north, and the ability to be a watchful eye for the dwarves.

### **Goblehole**

Goblehole, also known as the sunken city, is an abandoned city that somehow survived the Sundering. It is said that before the continent was split in two, the city was the center of a thriving farming community. Now, however, it sits long abandoned and aged at the bottom of the great chasm, though the majority of the buildings still stand in one form or another. The city itself is of little consequence, and more a stopping point used by the curious on their way to the Great

Labyrinth. It is said that the labyrinth was built by the titans in the ages before man, only to be uncovered during the second age of the dragons, though none can be sure. What is known is that almost none that enter ever return, and those that do are filled with the horrors that they lived inside those walls. What purpose the labyrinth serves is unclear, though there have been more than a few theories over the millennia. Not far from the city lies an alcove that juts into the river, and gives access to a half domed room that rest in the foot of the cliff face. There, upon a stone pedestal rests a book that looks to be in perfect condition, as though never touched by the elements.

### **Drunkbumton, and Winterghyl**

These towns are the only practical way to reach the mainland of Norvis. Drunkbumton is a port town built on the northernmost of the East Islands, and is used both to protect travelers from the giants, and as a naval outpost used to ensure that no giants leave Norvis. This is a highly fortified town that has defended from many attacks from giants and things wishing to conquer the land. Inside the center of Drunkbumton is a suspended trolley system that takes you into Winterghyl, located on the central island. Winterghyl has no entrance or exits other than the trolley from Drunkbumton and another trolley that connects to the town of Dropdep on the mainland, made so as to prevent the mainland from being attacked by intruders.

### **Dropdep**

This town receives the comers and goers from Winterghyl. The military force stationed here is almost as powerful as Lanminstry. Since they get people who travel and trade their goods, they check everyone who comes in and out of the mainland. Dropdep has an impressive castle that functions as the checkpoint because everyone must go through it. There is also a trade station here that allows people to sell their goods without traveling on to Lanminstry.

### **Grimonas**

All that remains of this city is ruins. It is said to have once been the domain of a royal family that escaped Vollois in the days of the Reality War. Some research has been done, however no link to who the family was, nor any information about why the city became abandoned has ever been uncovered. What is known is the city and castle are by far one of the creepiest places in all of Norvis. It is a hostile area; no one travels there, and the natural creatures of the area do not stray into the city.

### **The Northern towns**

There is little written on towns north of the chasm, especially those that do not show up on a map. The only one that much is known of is Cunech, which is said to be the seat of the giant lords. Few brave the chasm, but almost none venture to the northern ledge and journey north.